

**City of Fort Lauderdale
Community Services Board
February 9, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.
City Commission Chambers – City Hall
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

October 2014-September 2015

MEMBERS		PRESENT	ABSENT
Wendy Gonsher, Chair	P	4	0
Benjamin Bean (arr. 4:17)	P	4	0
Mark Fillers	A	3	1
Wanda Francis	P	4	0
Gwendolyn Haynes	A	1	2
Jason King	A	2	2
Chris Lovell (arr. 4:12)	P	4	0
Fred Roccanti	P	4	0
Gabe Sheffield	A	0	3
Jasmin Shirley	P	4	0
Noah Szugajew	P	2	0
Joseph S. Van de Bogart	P	3	0

Staff Present

Mario DeSantis, Liaison and Housing Administrator
Jonathan Brown, Housing and Community Development Manager
Lynn Solomon, Assistant City Attorney
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- **Quorum Requirement: As of February 2, 2015, there are 12 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 constitutes a quorum.**

Chair Gonsher called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll was called. It was noted a quorum was present.

II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

The Staff members present introduced themselves.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2015

Motion made by Ms. Francis, seconded by Mr. Lovell, to approve the minutes from January 12. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

IV. HOPWA

- **Conflict of Interest (Lynn Solomon, City Attorney's Office)**

Mr. DeSantis. introduced Lynn Solomon, Assistant City Attorney, who would address the issue of conflict of interest. Chair Gonsher clarified that the Board is interested in what constitutes a conflict of interest with respect to both voting and the procurement process.

Ms. Solomon advised that Section 112.3143 of the Florida Statute addresses voting conflicts for individuals serving on advisory entities. Conflict exists when an individual voting on an issue has a special private gain or loss: specifically, an economic benefit or harm. The Statute also includes individuals' relatives and the person or entity by whom the individual is retained. The individual must disclose this conflict appropriately, file the necessary disclosure form(s), and may neither vote on the issue nor participate in the discussion of it.

Other types of conflict, such as an attorney/client relationship, must also be disclosed to other members of the board. This disclosure must occur before a vote is taken, and also requires the filing of a disclosure form.

Chair Gonsher asked if an individual who has a level of expertise on a specific issue may share this knowledge with the Board without influencing their decision. Ms. Solomon recommended that any such individual refrain from participating in debate on this issue in order to err on the side of caution. She added that if a conflict is brought to the City Commission's attention, the Commission may choose to waive the conflict. A client of an agency currently providing them with a service, however, would be seen as a stakeholder, so there would be no conflict.

Ms. Solomon added that Section 112.3122 may provide an exception for individuals such as Ms. Shirley, who serves on the board of a specific agency but is not compensated for this service.

Chair Gonsher requested that a final decision be made on this issue prior to the HOPWA procurement process, as the Board has received conflicting opinions in the past. Ms. Solomon suggested that the Board contact the Commission on Ethics if additional information is necessary.

- **Program Update**

Mr. DeSantis reported that the Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) RFP has not yet been released, as it is still being vetted by the City. It must be released by February 28, 2015.

He added that he has sent a PowerPoint presentation on recent changes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the Board members. As more information on these changes becomes available, he will share them with the Board. Although Broward County has experienced the greatest increase in HIV/AIDS cases in the nation, HUD has reduced the overall amount of funding available for HOPWA.

- **Procurement Discussion (Barry Sageman, Finance Officer)**

This Item was deferred until a later date.

Mr. Brown advised that the City Manager has suggested changes to the HOPWA RFP. The Office of Housing and Community Development is working with Procurement to implement these changes, and will return it to the City Manager before it is released. The proposed changes include removal of financial capacity from the scoring criteria, as an agency without the necessary financial capacity to administer HOPWA should not be applying for funds. This is an important criterion, as reimbursements may take three to four months and agencies must be able to carry the program during this time.

He recalled that at the previous meeting, he had informed the Board that there is ongoing discussion of whether the City will administer the CDBG program throughout the current RFP period, or will secure an outside agency to do so. The Department had researched the issue of HOPWA municipalities throughout the State to determine which cities outsourced administrative services. All smaller municipalities outsource HOPWA administration, either to another nonprofit organization or to the State; however, all municipalities receiving more than \$2.3 million administer their own programs.

Mr. Brown continued that Fort Lauderdale is currently the 11th largest recipient of HOPWA funds in the United States and second-largest recipient in the State of Florida. An estimated 63% of clients served by these funds reside in Fort Lauderdale. He showed a brief video clip of the February 3, 2015 City Commission meeting, at which the issue of HOPWA administration was discussed by the Commissioners.

Mr. Brown advised that the upcoming RFP will include language that will allow the City to outsource HOPWA administration if they decide to do so. At present, there are sufficient funds for the administration of the program without additional financial assistance from the City: for the last three years, the program has operated solely on grant funds. If HUD continues to reduce HOPWA dollars in the future, however, this could have an impact on the City.

Mr. DeSantis explained that when an appropriations bill including HUD funding is passed, it will include language regarding administrative costs. These costs are

expected to include increases for the City and for HOPWA agencies. It was noted that in the video clip, City Manager Lee Feldman had referred to a possible future reduction in HOPWA funding, which could result in an administrative burden to the City, although there is no such burden at this time.

V. CDBG

• Possible Applicants

Mr. Brown stated that the Board was provided with a list of agencies that have submitted application summaries to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program thus far. Only one agency currently receiving funds has applied for the new grant cycle. Two other agencies, Jack and Jill Children's Center and the Broward Partnership for the Homeless, submitted their summaries after the deadline, and were present at today's meeting to appeal to the Board for consideration.

He added that one agency, Jamaica International Female Football Development, has submitted application summaries for different proposals within more than one CDBG category. The Board is also asked to determine if they will accept multiple applications by a single agency. The final application deadline is February 19, 2015.

The Board discussed the agency's request, noting that it is a 501(c)3 organization, and that no agency has applied in multiple categories before. Chair Gonsler expressed concern that the agency may be "category shopping," and pointed out that it is possible, under the current scoring system, that the agency could receive more than one award, which could lead to the possibility that they might receive more than the \$50,000 maximum. Ms. Shirley observed, however, that the Board has not placed any limitations on the number of categories or programs that may apply to the CDBG program.

The members also reviewed the scoring guidelines established at the January meeting, noting that even if only one agency applies within a given category, the Board may decide against funding that category. Mr. Brown recalled that in past years, some agencies have submitted application summaries but did not subsequently submit applications. It was determined that the Board would take no action at this time with regard to the possibility of multiple applications from an agency.

The Board moved on to the issue of the agencies with late application summary submissions. Mr. Brown clarified that the summaries were due by 10 a.m. on January 20, 2015. Staff reviews the summaries to ensure that applicants' projects meet CDBG funding requirements. All submitting agencies were made aware of this deadline at a required public meeting for applicants.

Michael Calderon, representing the Broward Partnership for the Homeless, advised that this agency was two hours late in submitting their application summary. He pointed out that the agency has a history of working with CDBG funding and has followed all other

requirements of the program. They have met the first quarter outcomes required by last year's application.

Marie Meyer, representing Jack and Jill Children's Center, stated that this agency was also two hours late in submitting its application summary. She noted that this agency also has a long history of working within the CDBG program and is a current recipient of CDBG funds.

Motion made by Mr. Lovell, seconded by Mr. Roccanti, to allow both agencies to submit an application for funding. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 7-1 (Ms. Shirley dissenting).

- **Review & Recommendation of Dates**

Mr. Brown described the processes the Board has used in the past for reviewing and funding CDBG applicants, stating that this process may require two to three meetings. Applications are due on or before February 19, 2015 at 3 p.m. and will be provided to the Board members before the end of February. It was determined that the Board would meet twice in order to hear presentations from all 12 applicants, followed by another meeting for deliberations and allocations; however, if fewer applications are received, only one meeting may be necessary to hear presentations.

It was determined that if two meetings are required to hear presentations, they will be held on back-to-back dates, followed by an additional meeting to make allocations. Members are asked to attend on both dates on which presentations are made. Mr. Brown concluded that Staff will seek confirmation that meeting locations are available on April 13 and 14, or April 20 and 21, at 4 p.m., and will communicate with the Board members to ensure that they are able to attend meetings on these dates.

Mr. DeSantis stated that HOPWA process will require two meeting dates in either May or June, depending upon the number of applications received. He requested that the Board members bring their calendars to the March meeting in order to further discuss dates for the HOPWA process.

VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Ms. Shirley asserted that she found it disheartening that large nonprofit agencies cannot comply with CDBG deadlines. She emphasized the necessity of meeting these requirements within the application process.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VIII. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

It was noted that a representative of the City's Procurement Department will attend the March meeting to address any questions or concerns regarding the procurement process. The Board will also be provided with updates on the CDBG application process and copies of the CDBG scorecards.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS TO CITY COMMISSION

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]